

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-6 (Cancelled)

7.(Previously Presented) A method for separation of a fluid, in particular oil, gas and water, in connection with the extraction of such a fluid from formations under the surface of the earth or the sea bed, in which the fluid is transported in a supply pipe or transport pipe (4) to a separator (1) in the form of a tubular separator body, a gravitation tank or similar, and where the separated components, water and oil, are passed out of the separator separately via outlet pipes,

wherein the fluid upstream of the separator (1) is subjected to shear forces so that the drops in the supply flow are torn up to form drops that are so small that the interface generally becomes new and "uncontaminated" by surfactants.

8.(Previously Presented) A method in accordance with claim 7, wherein the shear forces are supplied by means of a phase inversion device (6) in the form of a valve or similar.

9.(Previously Presented) A method in accordance with claim 7, wherein the upstream phase inversion device (6) has water supplied to it via a supply pipe (5) to the fluid.

10.(Previously Presented) A method in accordance with claim 7, wherein de-emulsifier is added before or after the phase inversion device (6) to prevent the phase-inverted fluid from inverting back to oil-continuous fluid.

11-12. (Cancelled)

13.(Previously Presented) A method in accordance with claim 8, wherein the upstream phase inversion device (6) has water supplied to it via a supply pipe (5) to the fluid.

14.(Previously Presented) A method in accordance with claim 8, wherein de-emulsifier is added before or after the phase inversion device (6) to prevent the phase-inverted fluid from inverting back to oil-continuous fluid.

15.(Previously Presented) A method in accordance with claim 9, wherein de-emulsifier is added before or after the phase inversion device (6) to prevent the phase-inverted fluid from inverting back to oil-continuous fluid.

16.(New) A method for separation of a fluid comprising oil and water, in connection with the extraction of such a fluid containing drops of water in oil or oil in water from formations under the surface of the earth or the sea bed, in which the fluid is transported in a supply pipe or transport pipe (4) to a separator (1), and wherein the separated water and oil are passed out of the separator separately via outlet pipes, wherein the fluid upstream of the separator (1) is subjected to shear forces so that the drops in the supply flow are torn up to form new drops that have a diameter that is less than a third of their original diameter and are so small that the interface generally becomes new and uncontaminated by surfactants.

17.(New) A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the shear forces are supplied by means of a phase inversion device (6).

18.(New) A method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the phase inversion device is in the form of a valve.

19.(New) A method as claimed in claim 17, wherein upstream of the phase inversion device (6), water is supplied via a supply pipe (5) to, the fluid.

20.(New) A method as claimed in claim 17, wherein de-emulsifier is added to the fluid before or after the fluid has passed through the phase inversion device (6) to prevent the phase-

inverted fluid from inverting back to oil-continuous fluid.

21.(New) A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the separator (1) is in the form of a tubular separator body or a gravitation tank.

22.(New) A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the new drops have a diameter that is less than 10% of their original diameter.

23.(New) A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein re-circulated water is added to the fluid upstream of the phase inversion device.

24.(New) A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the fluid contains drops of oil in water.